

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

McCain proposes shift from Bush foreign policy  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 72/NO. 15 APRIL 14, 2008

## D.C. coalition calls march for May Day

BY SETH DELLINGER

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 29—The first meeting of the D.C. May 1st Coalition was held here today at St. Stephen's Church to plan a May 1 rally and march from Malcolm X Park in Washington. The action will demand legalization for all undocumented immigrants and an end to immigration raids and deportations.

The coalition here was initiated by Mexicanos sin Fronteras (Mexicans Without Borders). This group led large mobilizations in Prince William County, Virginia, last year against a resolution granting local cops the powers of federal immigration agents. Thousands of workers participated in mass meetings, marches, a week-long economic boycott of non-immigrant businesses, and a one-day county-wide work stoppage. The law went into effect March 3.

In addition to Washington, D.C., May  
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## 'Militant' sub drive off to good start

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

The eight-week drive to expand the *Militant's* subscription base had a strong first week. More than 350 people subscribed, putting the campaign slightly ahead of schedule.

A highlight of the sales effort this week were actions by truck drivers to protest the rising cost of fuel, insurance, and maintenance. Forty-five truckers subscribed to the *Militant* and another 31 bought single copies at an April 1 action of 300 in New Jersey. Five of the truckers who sub-

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## Donate now to 'Militant'

BY CINDY JAQUITH

"The *Militant* newspaper is here to give our side of the story," announced one of the organizers of an April 1 truck drivers' rally in New Jersey (see above article). "I want as many of you as possible to come over and talk to them about why we're here today."

The warm welcome given the *Militant* by independent truck drivers underscores the important voice this paper gives struggles by working people. It also points to the opportunities to win financial support for the socialist press from workers, farmers, and other fighters looking for answers to the capitalist social and economic crisis.

We are one week into our spring fund  
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## Support truckers' fight against squeeze on standard of living!

The following statement was released March 28 by Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president.

My campaign calls on all working people to stand in solidarity with truck drivers fighting back against the decline in their standard of living, longer hours on the job, and unsafe working conditions.

As the capitalist economic crisis unfolds, truckers and all working people

### Socialist Workers Campaign Statement

face rising unemployment and spiraling inflation for basic necessities like food, fuel, and rent. Truck drivers are being devastated right now by skyrocketing fuel, maintenance, and insurance costs. Diesel prices have hit record levels. Parasitic insurance companies tie drivers' credit ratings to insurance premiums, meaning that insurance rates go up as drivers' ability to pay their bills on time goes down. Truck drivers face similar conditions to those who labor in mines, construction sites, and manufacturing  
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The Star Ledger/Mitsu Yasukawa

Dan Fein, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New York's 10th District, addresses April 1 rally of truckers in New Jersey. "We need a labor party based on fighting unions to organize working people in the political arena," he said.

## New Jersey truckers join nat'l protest

BY WILLIE COTTON

RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, New Jersey—"Bring down fuel costs!" "Sí, se puede!" (Yes we can) chanted 300 truck drivers at the Vince Lombardi truck stop off exit 18 on the New Jersey Turnpike. The drivers were part

of a national protest against rising diesel prices.

"We came to get the price of fuel to drop," said Ramón Pérez, an independent trucker for five years. "The rate we get paid for a load has stayed the same  
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## 'We need a labor party based on fighting unions' SWP presidential candidate Calero joins trucker rallies in Pennsylvania

BY JANET POST

HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania—Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Róger Calero joined two actions by truck drivers here protesting skyrocketing fuel prices.

At both events, Calero explained that rising fuel prices are one way in which the capitalist economic crisis falls disproportionately on working people. "This is why we need a labor party based on fighting unions," he said, "a party that can fight for legislation to protect workers and farmers, and can mobilize support for workers' struggles."

"I'm glad someone else thinks like me," said trucker Bill Carroll, after meeting Calero. Carroll had addressed truckers at a March 29 planning meeting

here and said that "the problem is these politicians." Pointing to the other truckers, he said, "We need one of us in the government."

Cheering and honking, close to 100 truckers circled the state capitol here March 31. Another 100 truckers and supporters rallied in the rain on the capitol steps. The average price of Pennsylvania diesel fuel is \$4.33 a gallon.

The rally also op-  
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Militant/Osborne Hart

Truckers and their families protest high operating costs at the state capitol in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, March 31. Socialist presidential candidate Róger Calero joined them.

## Vice presidential candidate brings socialist campaign to farmers

BY RACHELE FRUIT

CARROLLTON, Georgia—"Give me one of those newspapers. I've got no one to vote for," said E. C. Brandenburg, a cattle farmer from Heard County, Georgia. He was talking with supporters of Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president of the United States.

On March 31 Kennedy campaigned at the Carroll County Livestock Sales Barn cattle auction. Many farmers

told her about the impact of the economic crisis on them, as they listened with interest to Kennedy's proposals.

"We are not Democrats and we are not Republicans," she said. "We are the working-class alternative, and we believe that there is a great need for a labor party in this country that is based on fighting unions."

Most farmers said increasing production costs continue to drive small  
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Farmers in Argentina block roads over taxes 6



# Immigration debated in Spain

BY EMILY PAUL

Immigrant rights is a sharply debated issue in Spain, where foreign-born now account for 4.5 million of the country's 44 million people. The immigrant population has more than quadrupled in the past seven years to 10 percent of the population, one of the highest proportions of immigrants to native-born in Europe. The largest immigrant populations in Spain come from Ecuador, Morocco, and Romania.

In 2005, under the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) government, a "regularization" process was carried out that granted residency to an estimat-

ed 700,000 undocumented immigrants.

During the recent presidential elections, Mariano Rajoy of the conservative Popular Party denounced the SP stand on immigration as too permissive. PSOE leader and prime minister José Rodríguez Zapatero defended the amnesty for undocumented workers, saying it meant increased contributions by immigrants to the social security system and helped solve labor shortages in industries like construction.

After a decade-long boom, construction, which accounts for 18 percent of the Spanish economy, is slowing noticeably. Rajoy said he would expel immi-

grants who become unemployed and argued that Spanish citizens will have to compete with immigrants for jobs, school placements, and hospital beds if the economy enters a period of low growth.

He also proposed a legally binding "integration contract," in which immigrants would agree to uphold the Spanish Constitution, learn the Spanish language, and return home if they become unemployed or commit a crime. Following the precedent in France, Rajoy also proposed banning the Islamic headscarf from public schools.

Immigrants have come under physical attack as well. Last October the racist beating of a 17-year-old Ecuadoran woman on a Barcelona train sparked international outrage. The Association of Moroccan Immigrant Workers reported two attacks on their offices within a year. Last December, "Moors out of the neighborhood" was spray-painted on the office building next to a swastika, referring to people from northwest Africa.

The SP won the election, although it fell short of winning an absolute ma-



Immigrants from Colombia pick fruit in Barcelona, Spain. The foreign-born population of Spain has quadrupled since 2001.

## Growing number of workers pushed into part-time jobs

BY DOUG NELSON

As the economic squeeze on workers tightens, more are being pushed into part-time work.

Not since 1993 have so many people worked part-time jobs because they can't find full-time employment. This figure rose 13 percent from December to January when some 600,000 more people were forced to settle for part-time, according to the Labor Department's most recent figures.

To make ends meet, more workers are holding down multiple part-time jobs today than they have since the government starting keeping track in 1994.

The increase of multiple part-time job holders is largely due to a rise among female workers. More than 70 percent of the 1.8 million people with more than one part-time job are female.

The Labor Department classifies

part-time work as less than 34 hours per week. However, it has become more common for people working 40-hour weeks to be considered "part-time" by their employer. These workers receive lower pay and fewer, if any, benefits. Federal law requires bosses to pay overtime after 40 hours, but not that they consider employees working 50 or 60 hours per week to be full time workers. "Full time" status is often tied to workers' willingness to work constantly changing "flexible" shifts.

The change in the way work shifts are planned in the growing retail sector is one factor in the growth of part-time work. Major retail chains have adopted computerized work scheduling systems, which match staff size to customer traffic, hour by hour.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average supermarket worker's hours dropped from 32.3 hours per week to 29.5.

## THE MILITANT

### Free the Cuban Five!

The 'Militant' features regular coverage of the international campaign to free Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and René González—five Cuban revolutionaries locked up in U.S. jails on frame-up conspiracy charges.

Don't miss a single issue!



A plaque in Cuba declares, "They will return. We will conquer justice."

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306 W. 37TH ST., 10TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

## Quebec students protest cutbacks

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL—Students at the University of Quebec in Montreal are protesting moves by the school's administration to increase student fees, drastically reduce the programs offered, freeze hiring of new professors, and cut back on pay raises for support workers.

The accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers has recommended the cutbacks.

Students have held class boycotts and street actions. Three student leaders were banned from the campus for

20 days. On March 14, the Quebec Supreme Court granted a four-day injunction banning all protest activity within 100 meters of the university.

Rémi Daigle, internal affairs secretary for the Humanities Student Association, explained to the *Militant* that the administration "sees the university as a business that has to be profitable, like a hot dog production line, instead of being a place for social development."

Daigle said the measures will "force those from working-class and disadvantaged milieus to abandon school."

## The Militant

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Managing Editor: Cindy Jaquith

Washington correspondent: Sam Manuel

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Ved Dookhun, Martín Koppel, Paul Pederson, Doug Nelson, Ben O'Shaughnessy

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# Washington announces ‘pause’ in withdrawal of troops from Iraq

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, April 3—U.S. president George Bush and his top generals in Iraq say there will be a “pause” in any further reduction of U.S. troops in Iraq after the withdrawal this summer of 14,000.

In January 2007 the U.S. government began sending 30,000 additional troops to Iraq, bringing the total to 160,000. Over the year the U.S. military made gains on the ground, winning the co-operation of former Sunni militias in fighting al-Qaeda, substantially reducing attacks on U.S. and Iraqi government troops, and achieving a cease-fire with Muqtada al-Sadr’s Shiite militia.

At the beginning of March, Gen. David Petraeus, who heads U.S. troops in Iraq, said he would recommend a “period of assessment,” or a pause before further troop withdrawals, until as late as September. About 14,000 troops are to be withdrawn between now and July. Petraeus has said that after that, troop levels should be kept at about 140,000.

Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, declined to say whether he favors a pause in troop withdrawals. The Associated Press reported that in a March 26 closed-door Pentagon meeting with Bush, the Joint Chiefs of Staff expressed concern that the mounting strain of troop deployments could jeopardize the military’s ability to fight in other parts of the world, especially Afghanistan.

Fighting flared up the last week of March in Basra and in Sadr City between U.S.-backed Iraqi government troops and the Mahdi Army, al-Sadr’s militia. Rival Shiite capitalist forces are

vying for control of Basra, which controls 80 percent of Iraq’s oil resources and its only seaport.

On March 30 al-Sadr announced a cease-fire in the fighting after reaching an agreement with the Iraqi government to end round ups of his supporters and implement an amnesty to free prisoners. Iraq’s interior ministry said 210 people had been killed and 600 wounded in the fighting.

Officials in al-Sadr’s movement accuse his Shiite rivals of using the Iraqi army and police to round up Sadr supporters in order to gain an upper hand in provincial elections scheduled for October. Militias associated with the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) and prime minister Nouri al-Maliki’s Islamic Dawa Party (IDP) have been engaged in a long-running factional struggle with al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army for control of the region.

The Bush administration has pressed for the elections as one of its “benchmarks” for progress in stabilizing the country.

## Treasury Dept. releases plan for Wall St. banks

BY PAUL PEDERSON

March 29—The U.S. government and its central bank have begun to intervene directly in Wall Street to try to cushion the blow of the financial crisis. A U.S. Treasury Department plan announced today would increase the power and centralization of agencies that regulate financial institutions.

On March 16 the Federal Reserve conducted a forced sale of Bear Stearns. The failing Wall Street investment bank was sold for a fraction of its listed stock value to banking monopoly JP Morgan Chase.

That same day the Federal Reserve began lending directly to top Wall Street firms. Those loans averaged over \$31 billion a day in the first three days.

Today the Treasury Department released details of a plan that would consolidate several financial regulatory agencies and increase their powers. The Federal Reserve for the first time would be able to examine the books of brokerage firms, hedge funds, commodity traders, and other financial institutions.

The Treasury Department’s summary of the plan said that under the current structure, designed mostly in the 1930s, “no single regulator possesses all of the information and authority necessary to monitor systemic risk, or the potential that events associated with financial institutions may trigger broad dislocation or a series of defaults that affect the financial system so significantly that the real economy is adversely affected.”

Since the Great Depression in the 1930s, the federal government has regulated commercial banks, which hold customer deposits. But other financial institutions have faced much less stringent government oversight.

Commercial banks no longer have the assets or weight they used to have. Investment banks are a much bigger and more powerful component of the financial system.

Today only 20 percent of loans are made by regulated banks, Allan Sinai,



AFP/Getty Images

**U.S. soldiers take Iraqi man prisoner in Diyala Province, located northeast of Baghdad, on March 25. After withdrawals this summer, there will still be 140,000 troops in Iraq.**

Al-Sadr’s bloc holds as many seats in Iraq’s national parliament as the SIIC and he provided key backing when Maliki was named prime minister. Al-Sadr boycotted elections in 2005 giving the SIIC and IDP control of most of southern Iraq.

Bush praised the Iraqi government’s assault on al-Sadr’s militia, which he claimed was done at the initiative of Maliki. U.S. warplanes dropped bombs on

al-Sadr’s militia in Basra and Sadr City. U.S. troops battled militia members on the ground in Sadr City as well.

British Maj. Thomas Holloway told Agence France-Presse his troops were ready to enter the fighting in Basra if called on by the Iraqi government. London said March 18 that it would delay the withdrawal of 1,500 of its troops until the end of the year. The United Kingdom has 4,100 troops in Iraq.

## —CALENDAR—

### WASHINGTON

#### Tacoma

**Workers’ Assembly on Immigration.** An opportunity for workers to talk to one another about immigration, how it affects working families in all of our communities, and what we can do to stop exploitation on the job and in the streets. Fri., April 11, 4:30 p.m.; Sat., April 12, 9:30 a.m. *Evergreen State College, Tacoma Campus, 1210 6th Ave. Organized by: Labor Center at The Evergreen State College and El Comité Pro Reforma Migratoria y Justicia Social. Tel: (360) 918-2726. E-mail: bocanegi@evergreen.edu.*

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**Justice for Troy Davis! Abolish the Death Penalty!** Fri., April 11. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *3926 Mission St. Tel: (415) 584-2135.*

### IOWA

#### Des Moines

**Hear Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. President.** Fri., April 11. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *3707 Douglas Blvd. Tel: (515) 255-1707.*

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**China Today.** Speaker: Janet Roth, Communist League. Fri., April 11. Program, 7 p.m. Donation \$3. *7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Tel: (09) 276-8885.*

the chief global economist at Decision Economics, told the *New York Times*. Investment banks, mortgage brokers, and other bank-like financial institutions account for the rest.

Meanwhile, signs point to a deepening recession in the U.S. economy.

Home foreclosures continue to increase. Nearly one-third of those who took out high-interest “subprime” loans in 2005 and 2006 are unable to pay them. Nearly 9 million homeowners have mortgage debt greater or equal to the value of their home. The amount of equity held on average, compared with debt, has fallen below 50 percent for the first time since 1945.

In January 2007, 5 percent of home sales in San Diego were foreclosures. In January of this year, 34 percent of existing home sales were foreclosures.

“We are still in the early innings of

the bursting of the housing and credit bubbles,” financial commentator John Mauldin wrote in his weekly newsletter.

The government agency charged with insuring bank deposits is increasing its staff in the division that handles bank failures by 60 percent, the Associated Press reported. Analysts are projecting 150 bank failures over the next three years. There were five in 2007 and none the previous two years.

Meanwhile, price inflation continues to reduce workers’ take-home pay. According to a study by the *Washington Post*, prices for necessities like gasoline, groceries, and health care have risen 9.2 percent since 2006.

Dairy products are 15 percent costlier. Prices for fruits and vegetables are up 10 percent, and bakery products are up 8 percent.

## Panel Discussions on

### OUR HISTORY IS STILL BEING WRITTEN

#### The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

#### NEW JERSEY

##### New Brunswick

Tuesday, April 8

Time: Reception: 7 p.m. Program: 8 p.m.

Place: Rutgers University New Brunswick, Asian American Cultural Center, 48 Joyce Ave., Livingston Campus.

Speakers: Welcome by Matt Matsuda, College Avenue Campus Dean; Lawrence Louie, Editor-in-chief, *Native Tongue*; Robyn Rodriguez, Assistant Prof. of Sociology at Rutgers; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

For more information: Center for Latino Arts and Culture, Tel: (732) 932-1263 or Ingrid Franco, [imfc@eden.rutgers.edu](mailto:imfc@eden.rutgers.edu).

#### WASHINGTON

##### Seattle

Thursday, April 17

Time: 6:30 p.m., followed by reception.

Place: Room 103, Pigott Building, Seattle University.

Speakers: Saheed Adejumbi, Assistant

Prof. of History, Global African Studies Program at SU; Kan Liang, Director of International Studies and Associate Prof. of History at SU; Marc McLeod, Director of Latin American Studies and Associate Prof. of History at SU; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

For more information: Alexandria DeLong, [delonga@seattleu.edu](mailto:delonga@seattleu.edu).

#### IOWA

##### Iowa City

Thursday, April 24

Time: Reception: 6 p.m. Program: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Gallery Memorial Union, University of Iowa.

Speakers: Isela Guzmán, Activities Chair of Latinoamericanos; Christopher Hudson, President of Minorities in Agriculture; Juan Luís Vivero, Auditor of Latinoamericanos; Keith King, Public Relations Chair of Minorities in Agriculture; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

For more information: Tel: (787) 243-9127 or [isela13@iastate.edu](mailto:isela13@iastate.edu).





Amy Husk sells 'Militant' at April 1 action in New Jersey where 45 truckers subscribed.

## Sub campaign starts strong

Continued from front page  
scribed picked up *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, which is available at half price, \$5, with a subscription.

"Supporters of Socialist Workers Party campaigns, including Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey and Dan Fein, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in New York's 10th District, distributed a statement in support of the truckers," wrote Amy Husk, a medical equipment assembly worker from Newark. The organizers of the action invited Fein to address the rally and encouraged truckers present to pick up the *Militant*, which was telling the truth about their struggle.

The subscription effort has also gotten a boost from new readers joining the campaign. "A recent *Militant* subscriber who met supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign at a plant gate at the Cargill meatpacking plant in Beardstown, Illinois, joined a door-to-door team in Springfield to sell subscriptions," wrote Laura An-

derson from Chicago. Supporters of the paper from that city also went to Detroit this week to offer solidarity to striking auto workers at the American Axle plant there, and to Boiling Brook, Illinois, where they campaigned among independent owner-operators.

To get involved, contact local distributors near you listed on page 8.

## Supporters of framed-up death row inmate plan Georgia rally

BY CLAY DENNISON

ATLANTA—Supporters of Troy Davis, who is on death row in Georgia, have announced they will hold a rally in front of the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta on May 17 to stop his execution. The protest will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Amnesty International are the main organizers of the action.

Troy Davis has been on death row for 16 years, convicted of killing a Savannah, Georgia, policeman on the word of nine witnesses, seven of whom have recanted or contradicted their testimony. The Georgia Supreme Court voted to deny Davis's appeal for a new trial in a 4-3 decision on March 17.

Martina Correia, Davis's sister, talked to the *Militant* about the importance of a new motion by his lawyers to have the state supreme court reconsider its decision and grant him a new trial.

"I want the Georgia Supreme Court to look at this case again. It is too important to dismiss without a hearing," she said. The May 17 march "will be instrumental," she added. "Nothing positive comes without struggle."

Kimberly Alexander, president of the West Metro NAACP, said, "We are going to raise the visibility of the case and keep it in the news."

Alexander said activists "are hoping that buses will come from all over, like with the Genarlow Wilson and Jena 6

# Miami crane collapse highlights unsafe construction conditions

BY MAGGIE TROWE

MIAMI—Just 10 days after a crane fell in New York City killing seven, a similar accident in Miami took the lives of two and injured five.

Winds were gusty as construction workers building the Paramount Bay Condo, a 46-story luxury condominium building in downtown Miami, attempted to lift a 20-foot extension onto a crane, a process known as "jumping."

The seven-ton extension broke free and fell some 37 floors, crashing into a building below that was serving as a construction safety office.

Carpenter Jeremy Thornsbury, 21, and Terrance Hennessy, a safety inspector for an insurance company, were inside the building when the huge piece of equipment made impact. Hennessy died on the scene and Thornsbury died later that day.

Russell Dyer was working on a construction elevator 15 feet above the ground when he heard a loud sound overhead. Looking up to see the extension falling toward him,

Dyer jumped off the elevator and ran, suffering injuries.

The construction crew had already delayed jumping the crane for several days because of concerns about high winds, according to Dan Sielicki, risk manager for Baker Concrete, the company that had hired Morrow Equipment Co. to operate the crane.

Thomas Barth, owner of a South Carolina crane inspection company, told the *Miami Herald*, "It costs big money not to use a crane—the whole job shuts down. Supervision was probably pushing them to get that crane up there." Barth said construction bosses routinely push the limits.

Darlene Fossum, the area director for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, was quick to call Bovis Lend Lease, the project's general contracting company, a "very highly reputable and safety conscious company."

Morrow Equipment Co., which has one of the largest fleets of tower cranes in North America, had a fatal crane collapse in Bellevue, Washington, in 2006.

In the wake of that accident, inspectors examined cranes in the area, finding cracks in two cranes and faulty welding in a third. Two of the three faulty cranes were owned by Morrow.

In Florida crane operation is neither licensed nor regulated. After the fatal crane accident here, Florida governor Charles Christ said that he now supports pending legislation to regulate the training and certification of heavy crane operators.

cases," referring to recent mobilizations in support of Black defendants in Georgia and Louisiana.

Davis's supporters in the Atlanta area leaflet and petition at rush hour every Tuesday. Information on the case, activities, flyers in English and Spanish, and contact information can be found at [www.gfadp.org](http://www.gfadp.org).

## 'Militant' needs funds now

Continued from front page

drive to raise \$100,000. The drive is behind in collections. We should have received \$12,500 by now, but so far, just \$6,762 has come in. Many areas have yet to send any funds.

The *Militant* depends on the fund drive to cover our operating expenses. We rely on our readers to send in contributions to the drive every week, not just at the end of the campaign.

The fund covers the costs of printing the paper and shipping it out, as well as rent and utilities. It also includes travel expenses when we send correspondents to report on developments in the class struggle around the world, such as in Cuba, Venezuela, or China. All these costs have gone up significantly.

Some local areas have already hosted successful meetings to raise money for the *Militant*. At a March 21 event in New York to benefit the fund drive, Ma'mud Shirvani spoke on "The fight for national liberation from Kosova to Kurdistan."

Contact the distributors listed on page 8 to find out about the fund meeting in your area and to make a contribution. Or send a check made out to the *Militant* to 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Spring 'Militant' Subscription Drive March 22–May 18 ♦ Week 1 of 8			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
SWEDEN	25	8	32%
NEW ZEALAND	65	14	22%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	75	17	23%
Edinburgh	45	5	11%
UK Total	120	22	18%
AUSTRALIA	55	8	15%
UNITED STATES			
Twin Cities	145	30	21%
Des Moines, IA	140	28	20%
Miami	130	26	20%
Chicago	120	22	18%
Newark, NJ	130	22	17%
San Francisco	125	20	16%
Doraville, GA	130	19	15%
Carrollton, GA	145	21	14%
New York	325	46	14%
Washington, D.C.	140	19	14%
San Diego	8	1	13%
Philadelphia	85	10	12%
Boston	60	7	12%
Seattle	115	13	11%
Houston	90	8	9%
Los Angeles	110	6	5%
U.S. Total	1,998	298	15%
CANADA	105	2	2%
Int'l Totals	2,368	352	15%
Should be			13%

\$100,000 'Militant' Fund Drive March 22–May 18 ♦ Week 1 of 8			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
AUSTRALIA	2,000	265	13%
FRANCE	260	180	69%
UNITED STATES			
Seattle	7,000	2,415	35%
Twin Cities*	5,200	850	16%
New York	15,000	1,667	11%
San Francisco	12,000	1,100	9%
Miami	3,000	100	3%
Newark, NJ	3,700	90	2%
Washington, D.C.*	4,300	90	2%
Des Moines, IA	2,000	5	0%
Boston	2,800	0	0%
Carrollton, GA	4,700	0	0%
Chicago	7,000	0	0%
Doraville, GA	4,000	0	0%
Houston	2,500	0	0%
Los Angeles	8,500	0	0%
Philadelphia	2,500	0	0%
U.S. total	84,200	6,317	8%
CANADA	4,500	0	0%
NEW ZEALAND	3,200	0	0%
SWEDEN	1,000	0	0%
UNITED KINGDOM		0	
Edinburgh	600	0	0%
London	1,000	0	0%
UK total	1,600	0	0%
Int'l total	96,500	6,762	7%
Goal/Should be	100,000	12,063	12%
*raised goal			



# How Britain stole land from Kenya's farmers

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—"The days of Britain having to apologize for its colonial history are over," said Gordon Brown in 2005. "We should celebrate much of our past rather than apologize for it."

Today Brown is prime minister of the United Kingdom. The political crisis that developed following the December elections in Kenya—which has left at least 1,500 people dead and 600,000 driven from their homes—is firmly rooted in the colonial rule of that country by Britain's wealthy families, who continue to dominate Kenya's economy today.

Summing up the barbarity of London's rule in Kenya one former colonial official told a British TV documentary in 1987: "There were really no limits that they wouldn't go to."

Caroline Elkins, a professor of history at Harvard University, has authored the book *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya*, which provides useful information on Britain's divide-and-rule policy in that country.

There are more than 40 ethnic groups in Kenya. The largest is the Kikuyu at 22 percent—followed by the Luhya, Luo, and Kalejin at 14, 13, and 12 percent respectively.

Beginning in the late 19th century the British colonialists forced Africans off their lands in Kenya and replaced them with white settlers. Huge tracts of fertile land, especially in the "White Highlands," were stolen. From 1901 to

1904 Africans in Kenya lost 220,000 acres. That figure rose to 5 million acres by 1915.

Through "agreements" imposed upon the Masai ethnic group in 1904 and 1911, for example, the British rulers confiscated an estimated 50 to 70 percent of Masai land.


The Kikuyu were hardest hit by the land expropriations, according to Elkins, losing as much as 60,000 acres. Over time, the British pursued a course of driving them off their land, out of agricultural production as small farmers, and into wage labor working on the settler estates under "coercive and exploitative labor contracts," she writes.

To enforce separation between the different ethnic groups, Africans were pushed into "reserves"—much like the Bantustans of apartheid South Africa—and forced to carry the much-hated "kipande" identity pass. A "hut tax" was also imposed to force Africans to migrate in search of work.

Some Kikuyu became sharecroppers, or "squatters," on settler land. Many migrated to the capital city of Nairobi or other cities in search of work. Trade unions began to develop, which were banned by the British during World War II.

The colonialists imposed chiefs on the Kikuyu. In return for their loyalty to London, these despised collaborators were granted parcels of fertile agricultural land belonging to farmers of other

### Somalis protest 'antiterror' arrests in Sweden



Militant/Dag Tirsén

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—Hundreds gathered March 17 outside a courthouse here to demand the release of two Swedish citizens of Somali descent. Arrested February 28, they are being held without charges under the Terrorist Act of 2003. The police claim they made financial contributions to a terrorist group. In March the police shut down seven bilingual Somali and Swedish day care centers, claiming the owner was also involved in financing "terrorist activity." In face of protests, the centers have been reopened. But the owner is still imprisoned.

Many at the action pointed out that the only way to send money home to Somalia is through private financial networks. Some of these are now branded as linked to "terrorism."

"It could be me next," said a Somali taxi cab driver. "I also send money."

—ANITA ÖSTLING

## Rightists seize local gov't offices in Bolivia

BY MATILDE ZIMMERMANN

SUCRE, Bolivia—Opponents of the government of Evo Morales took over the state offices here on March 25, blocking transmission by progovernment TV and radio stations and chasing some civil servants away with batons and sticks of dynamite. Barricades closed the highway between Sucre and the mining center of Potosí.

Sucre, the former colonial capital and site of the Supreme Court and several prestigious private universities, is the provincial capital of Chuquisaca. The government opposition here is supporting calls for regional autonomy by the provincial governments of Santa Cruz, Beni, Pando, and Tarjia. The four eastern provinces plan to hold referendums on autonomy in the coming months. The Morales government calls this a referendum on secession and says it will not be allowed to take place.

The opposition in Sucre is demanding the seat of government be moved from La Paz to this city. The local governments pushing for autonomy oppose measures in the new constitution that call for land reform and nationalization of oil and gas. The opposition is also resisting the government's push to teach the country's main indigenous languages, Aymara and Quechua, in public schools. The majority of the population of Bolivia is indigenous.

The elected governor in Sucre resigned last November in protest against the new constitution, and an interim governor was appointed by La Paz. When the opposition took over the state offices on March 25, the interim governor announced a "collective vacation" and left town with some of his staff.

Sucre is sometimes called the "white

city" for its whitewashed town center of colonial buildings and churches. In this area, nearly every store has a poster against the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), the party of Morales. The most common show a picture with rifles crossing over the new constitution dripping with blood. Some of these anti-MAS posters are openly fascist, with a call for recruiting "White Shirts" and building a "Falangist" movement. The name Falangist comes from the Spanish civil war in the 1930s, in which the fascist forces were known as Falangists.



Militant/Arnold Weissberg  
Signs opposed to the central government in Bolivia posted at local government office in Sucre.

### 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 15, 1983

A fight with important implications for the entire working class has entered a decisive stage.

The case is that of Héctor Marroquín, who is fighting deportation. The government is trying to throw him out of the country because his Marxist ideas are not to the liking of the bankers and big businessmen who run this country. Marroquín is a member of the Socialist Workers Party. He has lived in this country for nine years.

On April 7, Marroquín filed an appeal in the Supreme Court against the decision of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to deport him. Unlike previous stages of the five-year-old legal fight there are no more appeals after the Supreme Court.



April 14, 1958

Another blood-curdling example of Jim Crow lynch law occurred in Tallulah, Louisiana, on March 27. The sheriff phoned C. S. Gundy and said: "your son is at the jail. Come and get him."

"Is he hurt?" the father asked. "He's dead," was the reply. Young Gundy's crime had been keeping company with a white girl in town. Police found out about it and trapped them together in a car. Young Gundy was put into the rear of the police car and there shot eight times. "Trying to escape," is the official story.

The girl is charged with "miscegenation," the Dixieland word for interracial association.



April 15, 1933

A viciously prejudiced jury composed of twelve representatives of the poisoned ideology of the reactionary, capitalist South brought in a verdict of guilty against Haywood Patterson, the first of the Scottsboro boys to be tried in the new trials ordered by the United States Supreme Court. According to Alabama law, the jury is charged with the duty of fixing the penalty. This jury decided on death in the electric chair.

With this verdict the blood-lust ridden southern capitalists have reaffirmed their intention to snuff out the lives of all who dare to resent and struggle against the intolerable conditions to which capitalism reduced the workers and sharecroppers in the South in its ruthless scramble for profit. It is class murder.



# Socialist brings campaign to Georgia cattle farmers

Continued from front page

farmers out of business. Don Strickland, a cattle farmer who also works in the construction industry in Atlanta, explained that the cost of fertilizer has gone from \$350 to \$650 per ton in the last six months. "It has gone up \$100 in the last three weeks," he said. Another farmer said that he had to cut back to using 5 tons of fertilizer from 10, and that he had cut his herd from 35 to 25 cows.

"The cost of feed has doubled," said Michael Turner, who has a small herd of goats and was looking to buy a couple of calves. Turner works for giant food distributor Sysco as a commission-based salesman to local restaurants. "My father worked for General Motors and was a proud member of the United Auto Workers," he added.

Most of the farmers said they were undecided about the elections. Strickland said the first time he could vote, his father, a union man, told him to vote for the Democrat, James Carter. "That brought us the antiunion 'right to work' law in Georgia," he said.

Several said they thought immigration was a key issue in the elections, and that too many immigrants were getting into the country, making it harder to fight for better conditions.

Kennedy disagreed. "My campaign

supports legalization for all undocumented workers," she said. She described a strike that she was part of with fellow coal miners for union recognition. "We were getting paid low wages with no benefits and unsafe conditions. The mine owners tried to take advantage of the fact that the majority of the miners were from Mexico." But the immigrant miners were in the forefront of the struggle, she said, which provided an example to other miners on how to fight for safer conditions.

"The fights that immigrant workers are leading today are an example for the entire working class," she said.



Alyson Kennedy, in dark jacket, talks with farmers at the Carroll County, Georgia, cattle auction March 31. Many farmers explained the devastating impact of inflation.

## Argentina: farmers block roads over taxes

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Thousands of farmers in Argentina have taken to the streets, organizing roadblocks and other mass actions across the country to protest a steep increase in taxes on agricultural exports by the government of President Cristina Kirchner. It is the first major political confrontation facing the new administration, elected last October.

On March 11, taking advantage of rising grain prices on the world market, the government in Buenos Aires raised

export taxes to as much as 44 percent on soybeans, sunflower seeds, wheat, meat, and other agricultural products. Just four months ago the tax had been hiked to 35 percent. With local and income tax, the total levy on agricultural exports is now 75 percent. While affecting agribusiness and wealthy farmers, the taxes hit small farmers the hardest.

For more than two weeks, organizations representing 290,000 farmers have set up at least 400 roadblocks across the country, especially in the soybean-producing central and eastern region. They have organized tractorcades in Córdoba and other cities. The roadblocks have prevented trucks from delivering farm goods, paralyzing exports of beef and grain and emptying supermarket shelves in the cities.

Kirchner, saying the government will not negotiate until the strikes end, has deployed paramilitary riot cops against the farmers.

Four major farm groups have spearheaded the protests. They include both the Argentine Rural Association (SRA), the traditional organization of capitalist landowners and agribusiness, and the Argentine Agrarian Federation (FAA), which organizes small farmers, known as *chacareros*.

The government is boosting its coffers at a time of rising food prices on the world market and a boom in Argentine grain production, which reached a record of 90 million tons last year. The sliding tax rates are based on international grain prices, rising or falling as prices go up or down. Argentina is the world's second-largest exporter of corn and third-largest of soybean. President Kirchner, who succeeded Néstor Kirchner, her husband, claims the tax increases are designed to "redistribute wealth"—to generate income for increasing employment and subsidizing food prices at home. Inflation in Argentina was 20 percent last year, and nearly 11 million working people—30 percent of the population—live below the official poverty line.

### Attempt to pit workers vs. farmers

The ruling party is Peronist, a term that comes from the bourgeois nationalist movement of Juan Peron, who used nationalist and proworker demagoguery to win popular support.

To justify the tax measures, government officials and supporters have tried to pit urban workers against rural toilers. Progovernment "Everyone with

Cristina" rallies took place in Buenos Aires March 25 and April 1. The General Confederation of Labor (CGT), Congress of Argentine Workers, and other unions mobilized their members to fill the Plaza de Mayo, where Kirchner accused the farmers of "extortion." The Córdoba paper *La Voz* reported March 27 that a group of truckers attacked a farmers' protest camp in Laboulaye, Córdoba province.

In contrast, the farm workers union UATRE has called for negotiations between the government and farmers' organizations.

Bourgeois opponents of the Peronists have seized on the farmers' mobilizations to organize several antigovernment protests. Thousands of people, many of them from upscale Buenos Aires neighborhoods, have held pot-banging demonstrations, known as *cacerolazos*, blaming the government for the farm crisis.

Peronist goons led by Luis D'Elía, a former leader of protests by unemployed workers and then an official in the Kirchner government, physically assaulted antigovernment demonstrators at a March 25 cacerolazo.

While the capitalist farmers of the Rural Association claim to speak for the entire "Argentine countryside," a lie promoted by the capitalist media and the Kirchner government, the conditions of the wealthy ranchers and the *chacareros* diverge widely.

"The state is going to take in \$12 billion this year in export taxes on soybeans alone, but that money does not make it back to the countryside," Argentine Agrarian Federation vice president Pablo Orsolini told the IPS news agency. "These taxes hurt large producers very little," disproportionately burdening small farmers, he noted.

The FAA proposes that export taxes vary depending on the size of the farm. Under such a system, farmers producing less than 600 tons of soybeans a year would pay taxes of up to 25 percent, those producing between 600 and 1,500 tons pay 35 percent, and those with higher outputs pay a higher rate. "Eighty-five percent of farmers fall into the first two categories," Orsolini said.

On March 31, 19 days into the farmers' strike, Kirchner refused to roll back the tax increase, but offered some concessions, including a tax rebate for small farmers and transportation subsidies in more remote areas.

### Candidate joins Georgia truck convoy



Militant/Cheryl Goertz

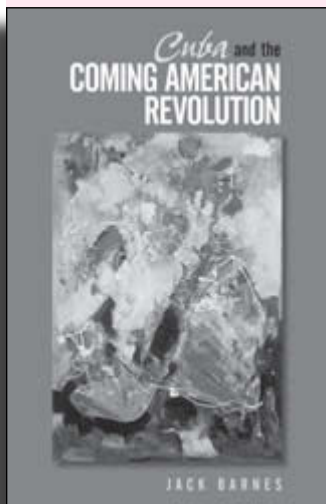
ATLANTA, April 1—Log hauler Brandy Thompson, above, invited Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, to ride in her truck in a convoy that circled Atlanta on I-285 today to protest rising fuel prices. Thompson and others have formed the American Fuel Consumer Movement to organize protests against the squeeze high fuel prices have put on independent truckers. She said that weekly meetings of the new group have drawn up to 300 people.

—BILL ARTH AND CHERYL GOERTZ

## Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

By Jack Barnes

With a new foreword by Mary-Alice Waters



"There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before there will be a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba."

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# McCain proposes shift from Bush foreign policy

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—In a wide-ranging March 26 foreign policy speech, John McCain, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, outlined some areas in which his administration would differ from that of President George Bush. His speech reflected the view of sections of the U.S. ruling class who sense the need for a shift in foreign policy in order to more effectively defend their interests.

“I detest war,” said McCain, a third-generation Navy officer. “Only a fool or a fraud sentimentalizes the merciless reality of war,” he said.

The Arizona senator called for a “new global compact” with “democracies” in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa—a “League of Democracies . . . that can advance our values and defend our shared interests around the world.”

“We need to listen to the views and respect the collective will of our democratic allies,” McCain said, in an implicit criticism of the Bush administration’s foreign policy. “When we believe international action is necessary. . . we will try to persuade our friends that we are right. But we, in return, must be willing to be persuaded by them.”

## Iraq and Afghanistan

McCain said the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan would remain pivotal in fighting what he called “radical Islamic extremism.” Answering his Democratic Party opponents who say al-Qaeda was not in Iraq before the war, McCain said, “Whether they were there before is immaterial, al-Qaeda is in Iraq now, as it is in the borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan, in Somalia, and in Indonesia.”

He said a premature withdrawal from Iraq would allow al-Qaeda to declare victory and continue to promote sectarian violence among Sunnis and Shiites.

McCain cited the successes Washington has made on the ground in Iraq with the addition of 30,000 more troops sent there last year. The Arizona senator has ridden the success of the surge to become the leading Republican candidate.

He said his administration would use greater resources to prevent conflict. “Our goal must be to win the ‘hearts and minds’ of the vast majority of moderate Muslims,” McCain said. “In

this struggle, scholarships will be far more important than smart bombs.”

## Close Guantánamo prison

McCain called for closing the prison at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay.

“We can’t torture or treat inhumanely suspected terrorists we have captured,” said McCain, who has been a vocal critic of the Bush administration’s use of “enhanced interrogation techniques,” a euphemism for torture.

In the Middle East, McCain said, Washington has depended on “autocrats” to provide order and stability. “We relied on the Shah of Iran, the autocratic rulers of Egypt, the generals of Pakistan, the Saudi royal family, and even, for a time, on Saddam Hussein,” he said. “We can no longer delude ourselves that relying on these outdated autocracies is the safest bet.”

## Nuclear non-proliferation

McCain said the U.S. government and its allies must work together to contain and reverse north Korea’s nuclear weapons program and to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. But he also said the U.S. government should work to reduce nuclear arsenals all around the world, “starting with our own.”

“Dealing with a rising China will be a central challenge for the next American president,” McCain said. His administration would encourage China

# ‘Americanism,’ Barack Obama, and Malcolm X

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

In his March 18 speech on race relations, Democratic presidential contender Barack Obama repeated the words “we” and “American” numerous times. He presented everyone living in the United States—workers, farmers, shopkeepers, and capitalists—as having common interests. But they don’t.

## AS I SEE IT

Obama said the task of his campaign is to bring about “a more just, more equal, more free, and more caring and more prosperous America.” He talked about “the men and women of every color and creed who serve together, and fight together, and bleed together under the same proud flag.”

# May Day action called for Washington, D.C.

Continued from front page

Day rallies have been called in Boston; Chicago; Detroit; Houston; Los Angeles; New York City; Miami; San Francisco; San Jose, California; Seattle; and St. Paul, Minnesota. Workers are discussing plans to skip work that day in a number of cities.

Since July, the Prince William County jail has held prisoners who do not have legal residency and turned them over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Nearly 700 have been turned over. The new law allows cops to question people about their status. In the first month, the

county police chief reported that 89 people were questioned, mostly at traffic stops and after calling the cops for service. Of those, 41 have been arrested.

Ricardo Juárez, a leader of Mexicanos Sin Fronteras, said the new laws have convinced some workers to move out of the area. Workers in the region are already hit hard by the downturn in the construction industry.

“We cannot say these people are leaving,” Juárez told the meeting. “They are being displaced.”

“It’s an injustice for immigrants and for everybody,” Julio Davila, told the



AP/Sgt. Patrick Lair

Republican presidential candidate John McCain, center, arrives in Mosul, Iraq, March 16. In a March 26 foreign policy speech, McCain distanced himself from the Bush administration, calling for a “League of Democracies . . . that can advance our values” around the world.

to be “more transparent about its significant military buildup,” to help isolate “pariah states such as Burma, Sudan, and Zimbabwe,” and cease efforts to “establish regional forums and economic arrangements designed to exclude America from Asia.”

McCain said his administration will be more active in Asia in alliance with Japan to counter China.

A strong European Union and NATO would be essential to counter Russia, which is trying to regain its old territories and status as a world power, McCain said. “We should start,” he said, “by ensuring that the G-8, the group of eight highly industrialized states, becomes again a club of leading market democracies: it should include Brazil and India but

exclude Russia.”

It should also be made clear to Moscow, he said, that NATO’s door “remains open to all democracies committed to the defense of freedom.” Several former Soviet republics have been admitted into NATO over Moscow’s objection.

McCain called for a new “21st century” relationship between North and South America where “trade is free across all borders.”

His administration would continue to place an increased importance on relations with “friendly governments” across Africa. It would have the goal of eradicating malaria on the continent—saving millions of lives and adding “luster to America’s image in the world.”

The America he was talking about is not the same one that the vast majority of Blacks and other working people live in. U.S. workers have nothing to be proud of in the record of wars waged by Washington around the world, wars that have taken a disproportionate toll on soldiers who are Black.

The day after his speech on race relations, Obama gave a foreign policy talk in which he proposed sending at least two additional combat brigades—as many as 6,400 troops—to Afghanistan. He said that by reducing troop levels in Iraq, his administration would be in a position to “start fighting the battles that need to be won on the central front of the war against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan.”

Obama’s foreign policy is an extension of his domestic outlook. “We

need to come together to solve a set of monumental problems,” he said, pointing to the wars in the Middle East, the unfolding financial crisis, and lack of health care. He said these are “problems that are neither black or white or Latino or Asian, but rather problems that confront us all.”

But there are no problems that exist above classes and class conflicts. Skyrocketing fuel prices have devastating consequences for independent truck drivers. High fuel prices are a profit boon for the energy monopolies.

Obama promised to build “ladders of opportunity” to overcome pervasive discrimination against Blacks. Such ladders do exist. But it’s only a very small percentage of workers and members of oppressed nationalities who are able to climb up them and carve out a place for themselves in bourgeois society. As long as capitalism exists, the overwhelming majority of working people will maintain their class position as workers, their children will be workers, and their children’s children will be workers.

Life for Blacks in the United States “is not an American dream, it’s an American nightmare,” the revolutionary leader Malcolm X said in 1964. “I’m from America, but I’m not an American,” he explained. “[I’m] one of the victims of Americanism, one of the victims of democracy, one of the victims of a very hypocritical system that is going all over this earth today representing itself as being qualified to tell other people how to run their country.”



# Internationalism and the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution

*Below is an excerpt from The Third International after Lenin, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. It contains the 1928 defense by the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky of the Marxist course that had guided the Communist International in its early years under the leadership of V. I. Lenin. That course of fighting to overthrow capitalist rule worldwide was replaced with the counterrevolutionary nationalist theory of "socialism in one country" advanced by a rising privileged caste headed by Joseph Stalin. Copyright ©1957 Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

The theory of socialism in one country inexorably leads to an underestimation of the difficulties which must be overcome and to an exaggeration of the achievements gained. One could not find a more antisocialist and antirevolutionary assertion than Stalin's statement to the effect that "socialism has already been 90 percent realized in the USSR." This statement seems to be especially meant for a smug bureaucrat. In this way one can hopelessly discredit the idea of a socialist society in the eyes of the toiling masses. The Soviet proletariat has



Congress of the Peoples of the East in Baku, Azerbaijan, September 1920. The congress was called by the Bolshevik-led Communist International, which charted a course of world socialist revolution, counter to the "socialism in one country" course adopted later by Joseph Stalin.

achieved grandiose successes, if we take into consideration the conditions under which they have been attained and the low cultural level inherited from the past. But these achievements constitute an extremely small magnitude on the scales of the socialist ideal. Harsh truth and not sugary falsehood is needed to fortify the worker, the agricultural laborer, and the poor peasant, who see that in the eleventh year of the revolution, poverty, misery, unemployment, breadlines, illiteracy, homeless children, drunkenness, and prostitution have not abated around them. Instead of telling them fibs about having realized 90 percent socialism, we must say to them that our economic level, our social and cultural conditions, approximate today much closer to capitalism, and a backward and uncultured capitalism at that, than to socialism. We must tell them that we will enter on the path of *real* socialist construction only when the proletariat of the most advanced countries will have captured power; that it is necessary to work unremittingly for this, using both levers—the short lever of our internal economic efforts and the long lever of the international proletarian struggle.

In short, instead of the Stalinist phrases about socialism which has already been 90 percent accomplished, we must

speak to them the words of Lenin:

"Russia (the land of poverty) will become such a land (the land of plenty) if we cast away all pessimism and phrasemongering; if clenching our teeth, we gather all our might, strain every nerve and muscle, if we understand that salvation is possible *only* along the road of international socialist revolution that we have entered." (*Works*, vol. 15, p. 165.)

From prominent leaders of the Comintern we have had to hear such an argument as: the theory of socialism in one country, of course, is unfounded, but it provides the Russian workers with a perspective in the difficult conditions under which they labor and thus gives them courage. It is difficult to plumb the depths of the theoretical debacle of those who seek in a program not for a scientific basis for their class orientation but for moral consolation. Consoling theories which contradict facts pertain to the sphere of religion and not science; and religion is opium for the people.

Our party has passed through its heroic period with a program which was entirely oriented on the international revolution and not on socialism in one country. Under a programmatic banner on which was inscribed that backward Russia alone, with her own forces, will not build socialism, the YCL [Young

Communist League] has passed through the most strenuous years of civil war, hunger, cold, hard Saturday-ings and Sunday-ings, epidemics, studies on hunger rations, all the numberless sacrifices which were paid for every forward step taken. The members of the party and the YCL fought at the front or lugged logs to the railroad stations, not because they hoped to build national socialism out of those logs, but because they served in the cause of international revolution which made it essential that the Soviet fortress hold out—and every additional log is important for the Soviet fortress. That is how we used to approach the question. Times have changed, things have altered (yet, not so very radically), but the principled approach retains its full force even now. The worker, the poor peasant and partisan, and the young communist, have previously shown by their entire conduct up to 1925, when the new gospel was for the first time proclaimed, that they have no need of it. But in need of it is the functionary who looks down on the masses from above; the petty administrator who does not want to be disturbed; the apparatus retainer who seeks to dominate under cover of an all-saving and consoling formula. It is they who think that the ignorant people need the "good tidings," and that there is no dealing with the people without consoling doctrines. It is they who catch up the false words about "90 percent socialism," for this formula sanctions their privileged position, their right to dominate and command, their need to be rid of criticisms on the part of "skeptics" and men of "little faith."

Complaints and accusations to the effect that the denial of the possibility of building socialism in one country dampens the spirit and kills enthusiasm are theoretically and psychologically closely related to those accusations which the reformists have always hurled at the revolutionists, notwithstanding the entirely different conditions under which they originate. Said the reformists: "You are telling the workers that they cannot really improve their lot within the framework of capitalist society; and by this alone you kill their incentive to fight." It was, indeed, only under the leadership of revolutionists that the workers really fought for economic gains and for parliamentary reforms.

April

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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**MINNESOTA: Minneapolis:** 1311 1/2 E. Lake St. Zip: 55407. Tel: (612) 729-1205. E-mail: tcswp@qwest.net

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**NEW YORK: Manhattan:** 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 629-6649. E-mail: newyorkswp@mac.com

**PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia:** 188 W. Wyoming Ave. Zip: 19140. Tel: (215) 455-2682. E-mail: philaswp@verizon.net

**TEXAS: Houston:** 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Zip: 77092. Tel: (713) 688-4919. E-mail: swp.houston1@sbcglobal.net

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** 3717 B Georgia Ave. NW, Ground Floor. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 536-5080. E-mail: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

**WASHINGTON: Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: seattleswp@speakeasy.net

### AUSTRALIA

**Sydney:** 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl\_australia@optusnet.com.au

### CANADA

**QUEBEC: Montreal:** 7105 St. Hubert, Suite 106F, H2S 2N1. Tel: (514) 272-5840. E-mail: clic\_can@bellnet.ca

### FRANCE

**Paris:** P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 40-10-28-37. E-mail: milpath.paris@laposte.net

### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland:** Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. E-mail: clauack@xtra.co.nz

### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: kfstockholm@tele2.se

### UNITED KINGDOM

**ENGLAND: London:** First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane). Postal code: E2 6DG. Tel: 020-7613-3855. E-mail: clondon@onetel.com

**SCOTLAND: Edinburgh:** Second Floor, 105 Hanover St. Postal code: EH2 1DJ. Tel: 0131-226-2756. E-mail: cledinburgh@talktalk.net

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The Militant April 14, 2008



# Build support for truckers’ fight!

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plants all over the country—speedup and longer hours that compromise safety on the job.

When elected, I will use the authority of the presidency to support struggles by truck drivers, and other workers, to unionize. I will introduce legislation to exempt individual owner-operators from antitrust laws that make it illegal for them to strike.

My administration will repeal all sales taxes, including fuel taxes, which are reactionary because they disproportionately burden working people.

I will appoint socialists to the Department of Labor who will institute an automatic cost-of-living increase in workers’ wages and per-load rates. As diesel, maintenance, and insurance prices go up, truckers’ income would go up to match so that they bring home the same size paycheck. My administration will end the rigging of inflation statistics that grossly understates the rising cost of fuel and other necessities. Government calculations will be based on what working people actually face at the gas pump and in the grocery store.

I will introduce legislation to create a massive public works program that will put millions to work at union-scale wages to repair deteriorating infrastructure that increases the dangers truckers face every day. Crumbling roads and bridges mean more wear-and-tear on tires and vehicles, adding additional maintenance costs that the giant transportation companies foist on

individual owner-operators.

My administration will put forward legislation to nationalize the energy industry, taking these profit-driven corporations out of private hands and running them as public utilities for the benefit of the majority. We will fight to open up the books of the oil and coal monopolies to reveal how they compromise the lives and livelihoods of millions of working people for their own profit. We will demand that oil refineries, coal mines, and ports be placed under workers’ control to enforce safe working conditions, reasonable prices for energy, and higher wages.

Workers cannot wage a struggle around these demands while tied to the Democrats and Republicans. We need a labor party based on fighting unions. This plank is central to the campaign that my running mate, Alyson Kennedy, and I are waging.

A labor party can contest against the capitalist parties in the political arena and bring the weight of the labor movement to bear on economic and social questions. The protests and strikes by truck drivers are one stepping stone toward a transformed labor movement that can fight in the broad interests of the working class as a whole.

To replace the state power of the tiny propertied minority that rules today we must build a revolutionary movement of millions. That movement will establish a workers and farmers government that can begin organizing society in the interests of the vast majority.

# Calero: ‘We need a labor party’

## Continued from front page

posed Pennsylvania’s highest-in-the-nation diesel tax, additional tariffs on interstate highways, and the proposed privatization of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

“I couldn’t afford to bring my truck to the rally today,” said Danny Messaros, who comes from a family of truckers and has been driving for 17 years. “Why do we have to pay for highways that we’ve already paid for several times over?”

“We need to nationalize the energy industry under workers control, so that working people can see where the profits are really going, and make fuel affordable,” Calero told a group of drivers.

“I agree that key industries should be nationalized, not all of them,” responded one trucker. “But key ones should be regulated.”

Calero told the truckers that millions of working people are feeling the impact of the deepening economic crisis, and that he was calling for solidarity with the truckers’ fighting initiative. He described struggles by immigrant workers and urged the truckers to link up with May Day demonstrations for legalization of workers without documents scheduled across the country.

Some were glad to hear about the fight for legaliza-

tion. One trucker disagreed. “No, our fight is different, this is to defend American jobs,” he said.

The socialist candidate explained how the bosses play on divisions of nationality to pit working people against each other. “Just like they pit independent truckers and farmers against workers who are angry about high prices,” he said.

Manuel Ochoa, a trucker originally from Ecuador, said that the fight for the rights of immigrants is connected to the concerns of the truckers.

“This isn’t just about truckers,” demonstration organizer and owner-operator Mark Kirsch said from the stage at the March 31 rally. “It’s also about fishermen and farmers and that retired couple down the street on a fixed income.”

Several of the trucks bore signs including, “Food or Fuel?” “Break Open the Bank,” and “Truckers United Protest Fuel Prices!”

Following the rally, many truckers demonstrated across from a local diner where Democratic Party presidential contender Hillary Clinton was expected to campaign later that day for the upcoming primary.

The truckers plan another protest meeting at the Gables Truckstop near Harrisburg April 5.

## LETTERS

### Cuban elections

I very much needed your comments on Cuba’s National Assembly elections. You explained Raúl Castro’s speech in a way that showed the historic context of his points.

*James Lambrecht*  
*By e-mail*

### SWP presidential campaign

I have been excited to read about the Socialist Workers campaign and am a proud supporter of it. For supporters of the campaign, it would be helpful to have a website that contains all the campaign-related material, which the *Militant* did last time around.

Also, I noticed that in the lead sentence of the front page story in a recent issue, Alyson Kennedy is quoted as saying that if the SWP candidates were elected to office,

they would “enact legislation” to end raids and deportations. It’s good for the campaign to tell workers what concretely they would do if elected, but last time I checked the president and vice president don’t “enact” legislation—Congress does.

It would probably be more helpful for the campaign to say that if elected, the SWP candidates would lead a fight for legislation to end raids and deportations.

*Carl Weinberg*  
*Bloomington, Indiana*

### Strikes in Vietnam

Recently there were a couple of interesting articles in the *Vietnam News*. One reported that there was a big increase in the number of “unauthorized” strikes in Vietnam in 2007, particularly in the garment industry. A major fac-

tor in these strikes has been that wages are not keeping up with inflation.

A couple of days later an article appeared reporting that the government is going to fine workers engaging in “unauthorized” strikes up to three months’ pay.

I don’t think that class tensions in Vietnam have reached the level of China. But things seem to be heading in the same direction.

*Tony Prince*  
*Hanoi, Vietnam*

**The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**

# Truckers stop work nationwide

## BY DOUG NELSON

Independent truckers demonstrated April 1 at ports and on roads across the country. Many more parked their rigs and took part in the nationwide strike.

Owner-operator truckers are sick of watching their income dwindle. The average price of diesel fuel nationwide has hit \$4.02, a record high. At the same time, truckers say, freight rates have been stagnant for years.

The strike was built by word of mouth.

On the New Jersey Turnpike, about 300 truckers staged a protest at a major truck stop. Southbound rigs as far as the eye could see jammed traffic as they crawled along the road at midday.

More than a dozen truck tractors blocked traffic into Chicago on Interstate 55 near the Dan Ryan Expressway. State cops ticketed the drivers.

The *Salt Lake Tribune* said commuters reported seeing fewer trucks on Utah’s main highways.

A convoy of about 30 trucks circled Atlanta’s beltway in protest. The truckers were prevented from driving into the city to demonstrate at the state Capitol, and some were ticketed.

About 70 rigs parked outside the port of Tampa. Owner-operators protested there against local brokers’ low freight rates.

Some truckers are planning further actions. One leaflet calls for a week-long strike starting May Day.



## BY JOE SWANSON

DES MOINES, Iowa—“My fuel cost have risen steadily over the last year,” said Kyle Mahr over coffee at the Flying J truck stop in West Des Moines. Mahr, a 31-year veteran driver, was hauling autos from a Ford distributor in Indiana to Kansas and Oklahoma.

Mahr has paid off two trucks and two auto carriers that he and his son operate. “Auto haul business was better a few years ago,” Mahr explained. “If I still had those monthly bank payments like I did a few years ago, with the added diesel fuel cost, I would be in big trouble now with my banker.”

“We support the shutdown by the drivers,” Mahr said. “Something needs to be done, and we need to show that people are fed up.”

“I just heard about the truckers’ strike on the radio yesterday,” said Alr Rafle, who is originally from Kenya. “In the three years I have been driving, there has been ongoing CB chatter about a strike,” he said. “I have not yet decided what I will do on April 1.”

“I know what the independent drivers are going through,” said Roy Jones, now a fleet driver from Austin, Texas, in an interview at Pilot truck stop. “If I was still an owner-operator I wouldn’t be able to survive.”

# New Jersey truckers

## Continued from front page

and we are the ones that suffer.”

“The cops tried to shut us down,” said Cristian Abreu, a driver for 11 years. “They can’t shut us down. We deliver their food. Just hear us out. This country really depends on the trucking industry,” he added.

New Jersey State troopers at first tried to shut down the protest, but backed off when more drivers arrived. Many drivers from the port of New York/New Jersey stayed away from work and drove their cars to the rally. Most were Spanish-speaking.

Sandy Pope, business agent for Teamsters Local 802 in New York City, spoke at the rally and said, “We are with you.”

Trucker Edison Villacis also spoke. “When they ask us tomorrow what we want, you should tell them we want respect,” he said. “We are all brothers. We have to unite. We have to organize!”

Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New York’s 10th C.D., addressed the rally. “When Congress discusses transportation, taxes, tolls, and other things that affect truckers and other working people, no one is there representing you,” he said. “The Democrats and Republicans speak only for the ruling rich. We need a labor party based on fighting unions to organize working people in the political arena. Your protest here today is an example for others to follow. *Sí, se puede!*”